IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with strikethrough. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1, 4 and 5 in accordance with the following:

1. (currently amended) A method of encouraging a customer to visit a hair salon, said method comprising:

storing in a customer management information database upon the customer's visit to a hair salon, customer information, the customer information comprising a hair length, the diameter and a type of hair, a hair type, a hair growth rate, an image of a customer's face, a previous date of a hair cut and hair cut intervals;

deriving an expected next date of visit of the customer, the expected next date of visit of the customer is derived based on the previous date of the hair cut and and the hair cut intervals of the customer;

calculating expected the hair length of hair by adding the product of the number of days between the previous haircut and the expected next date of visit and the hair growth rate to based on the hair length at for the date of previous date of the hair cut, the number of days between the previous date of the haircut and the expected next date of visit, and the hair growth rate;

making a hairstyle matched with images of a customer's face stored in the customer management information database if the hair length and the diameter and the type of hair are matched with hair conditions necessary for making the hairstyle stored in the hairstyle information database; and

producing prior to the expected date a direct mail containing suggestions of the hairstyles made in the step of making the hairstyle that can be applied to the customer when said expected date of visit of the customer is a predetermined period ahead.

Claims 2-3 (cancelled)

4. (currently amended) A computer readable medium storing a program ~~code~~ for ~~causing a computer to encourage~~ encouraging a customer to visit a hair salon, the program which when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform a process, comprising:

storing in a customer management information database upon the customer's visit to a hair salon, customer information, the customer information comprising a hair length, the diameter and a type of hair, ~~a hair type,~~ a hair growth rate, an image of a customer's face, a previous date of a hair cut and hair cut intervals;

deriving an expected next date of visit of the customer, the expected next date of visit of the customer is derived based on the previous date of the hair cut and the hair cut intervals of the extracted customer information;

calculating ~~expected~~ the hair length of ~~hair by adding the product of the number of days~~ ~~between the previous haircut and~~ the expected next date of visit ~~and the hair growth rate to~~ based on the hair length ~~at~~ for the ~~date of~~ previous date of the hair cut, the number of days between the previous date of the haircut and the expected next date of visit, and the hair growth rate;

making a hairstyle matched with images of a customer's face stored in the customer management information database if the hair length and the diameter and the type of hair are matched with hair conditions necessary for making the hairstyle stored in the hairstyle information database; and

producing prior to the expected date a direct mail containing suggestions of the hairstyles made in the step of making the hairstyle that can be applied to the customer when said expected date of visit of the customer is a predetermined period ahead.

5. (currently amended) An apparatus for encouraging a customer to visit a hair salon, said apparatus comprising:

input means via which information related to the customer is input into said apparatus;

a first database in which information related to the customer is stored, said information related to the customer including a hair length, a diameter and type of hair, ~~a hair type,~~ a hair growth rate, an image of a customer's face, a previous date of a hair cut, and hair cut intervals;

a second database in which information related to latest hairstyles is stored; and

a processing part including an registration program for registering information into said first and second databases and direct mail sending program that derives an expected next date of visit of the customer using data obtained from said first database based on previous date of the haircut and the hair cut intervals of the customer and, when said expected date of visit of the

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customer is a predetermined period ahead, calculating ~~expected~~ the hair length of ~~hair by adding~~ ~~the product of the number of days between the previous haircut and~~ the expected next date of visit ~~and the hair growth rate to~~ based on the hair length ~~at~~ for the ~~date of~~ previous date of the hair cut, the number of days between the previous date of the haircut and the expected next date of visit, and the hair growth rate;

making a hairstyle matched with images of a customer's face stored in the customer management information database if the hair length and the diameter and the type of hair are matched with hair conditions necessary for making the hairstyle stored in the hairstyle information database and producing prior to the expected date a direct mail containing suggestions of the hairstyles made in the step of making the hairstyle that can be applied to the customer when said expected date of visit of the customer is a predetermined period ahead.

6. (original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said first database includes fields related to data such as customer number, management number, name, sex, postal address, E-mail address, telephone number, mobile telephone number, birthday, age, occupation, direct mail sending interval, direct mail producing interval, normal visit interval, previous date of visit, previous length of hair (front, back, outer and inner), growth rate, type, diameter, number of visits, shortest visit interval, average visit interval, longest visit interval, an image of the face and an image of the total body.

7. (original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said second database includes fields related to data such as style code, required length (front, back, outer and inner), image file name of the face, image file name of the total body, type of hair, diameter of hair, and whether it is a trend or not.

8. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the customer is an individual customer and the suggestions of hairstyle are made with reference to the individual customer's present hair condition.

9. (cancelled)